

TATURA BUTLER [1888] (INSECTA, LEPIDOPTERA): REQUEST
FOR A RULING ON THE TYPE-SPECIES. Z.N.(S.) 1912

By C. F. Cowan (*Little Gaddesden House, Berkhamsted, Herts., England*)

Godman & Salvin, 1887 (*Biol. Centr. Amer.*, Lepid., Rhop. 2 : 99), introduced the name *Theclopsis* for a new Neotropical genus with designated type-species *Thecla lebena* Hewitson, 1868, from Cayenne. These names are entirely valid and not here in question.

2. Butler [April, 1888] (*Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* 1887 : 572), introduced the apparently new name *Tatura* when listing some African Lepidoptera, with no other data than the bare entry:

"*Tatura lebena* Hewitson, *Descr. Lyc.* p. 9, no. 21 (1868); *Ill. diurn. Lep.* p. 127, no. 202, pl. 51, figs. 266-7."

3. At first sight the monotypic *Tatura* Butler is a junior objective synonym of *Theclopsis* Godman & Salvin. But a lapsus has occurred. No collection from the Cameroons, as listed by Butler, could have contained a specimen of the Neotropical *Thecla lebena*.

4. Butler's *Tatura* was undoubtedly meant to apply to, and has since invariably been used for, the now well known *Hypolycaena lebona* Hewitson, 1865 [in 1863-1878], *Ill. diurn. Lep.*, *Lyc.*: p. 51, pl. 23, from Old Calabar. Consulting Hewitson's Index (which is grouped by genera, not species), Butler must have failed to find *lebona* but noted *lebena* instead, given as page 127 and plate 51 (not p. 51 where *lebona* is), and, turning to that page, copied the references there given without checking either the appended description or the plates.

5. The name *Tatura* has been mentioned several times subsequently, each time as casually as the first, both by Butler and by Sharpe, in lists of African species published in the *Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* (e.g. 1888 : 69, 1893 : 661, 1894 : 343, 569, 1898 : 370). On each occasion various species which are still classified as *Hypolycaena* were included, and the original lapsus naming *lebena* for *lebona* seems never to have been noted before now.

6. In the latest treatment of African Lycaenidae, Stempffer, 1967 (*Bull. Br. Mus. nat. Hist. (Ent.)* Suppl. 10 : 117), although not indexing the name, briefly mentions *Tatura* Butler, based on *H. lebona*, as a possible future subgeneric name under *Hypolycaena* sens. lat. The latter genus, typically Indo-Australian, will eventually require subdivision in Africa. Before then it is desirable to define *Tatura* Butler. No confusion has ever arisen over the name, which has been used exclusively for African species, and there is no present threat to stability.

7. The International Commission may consider that, in these circumstances, use of the plenary powers is not warranted; that *Tatura* Butler should stand with its accidental misnomer as type-species which makes it an invalid junior objective synonym of *Theclopsis* Godman & Salvin. No harm would result, and the field will be clear for future workers. The alternative, of correcting the lapsus, is requested formally below.

8. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly requested:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to set aside all designations of type-species for the genus *Tatura* Butler [1888] and, having done so, to designate as the type-species of that genus the species *Hypolycaena lebona* Hewitson, [1865];
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the generic name *Tatura* Butler, [1888], *Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* **1887** (4) : 572 (gender: feminine), type-species by designation under the plenary powers in (1) above, *Hypolycaena lebona* Hewitson [1865], *Ill. diurn. Lep., Lyc.* (2) : 51, pl. 23;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the specific name *lebona* Hewitson [1865], as published in the binomen *Hypolycaena lebona* (type-species of *Tatura* Butler, 1888).

RELEVANT REFERENCES

- BUTLER, A. G. [April, 1888]. On two small collections of African Lepidoptera recently received from Mr. H. H. Johnston. *Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.*, **1887** (4) : 567-574
- HEWITSON, W. C. 1863-1878. *Illustrations of diurnal Lepidoptera, Lycaenidae*. (2) [1865] : 37-76, pls. 17-30; (4) [1869] : 115-136, pls. 47-54, & Suppl. (1). [completed in 8 parts].
- 1868. *Descriptions of some new species of Lycaenidae*. [4] + 36 pp. London. [for the *Theclopsis* species only].
- STEMPFER, H. 1967. Genera of the African Lycaenidae. *Bull. Br. Mus. nat. Hist. (Ent.)* Suppl. 10. [1-3], 4-322 pp., 348 figs., 1 pl. (col.)

